

MAY  
2026

# The Orchid Grower

Madison Orchid Growers Guild presents . . .

**Spring Orchid Sale**

**MAY 9TH**  
**10 AM TO 2 PM**  
**OR WHILE SUPPLIES LAST . . .**

Featuring a Selection of Blooming Orchids & Orchid Growing Supplies

For more information: [OrchidGrowersGuild.org](http://OrchidGrowersGuild.org)  
Like us on Facebook

**Olbrich Botanical Gardens**  
3550 Abwood Ave., Madison, WI 53704

Orchid Growers Guild of Madison

[www.Orchidgrowersguild.org](http://www.Orchidgrowersguild.org)

**NEXT MEETING MAY 17th**  
**Annual Elections plus Bill Thoms:**  
**Bulbophyllums**  
***The Incomplete Guide***  
**From A to Why?**



Bill Thoms has grown and shown orchids for more than 45 years in the central Florida area. He has more awards for Culture in Bulbophyllums than anyone else in the world (51 so far) – and he and Doris Dukes together have 105 Cultural Awards in 30 different genera. The American Orchid Society has added a new Annual Award for the Bulbophyllums, the Bill Thoms Award. Bill gives talks all over the world on a wide range of topics ranging from his specialty, “Bulbophyllums”, to General Orchid Culture which is a favorite of most new growers. They all are presented in a funny style that helps growers understand how the plants work and they all revolve around the Culture of Orchids. He helps the beginner grower with lots of advice about fixing problems and has a wealth of accumulated information for the more advanced grower, too! – AOS.org

## President's Message

Who says “April Showers Bring May Flowers?” We know that April Auctions Bring Us... Orchids! I would like to thank Chuck Acker for spending so much time, energy and effort to bring us so many wonderful plants for us to bid on for our fundraiser. Even if you didn't go home with any new (to you!) plants, Chuck's slides were so educational. In addition to the geographic origin and cultural information of the plants we learned how to correctly pronounce many of the names that we see come across our plant tags.

If you didn't get to bid on any auction plants, you still have a chance to purchase a new orchid at our annual Mother's Day Orchid Sale in the Commons at Olbrich Gardens on Saturday, May 9th. The set up starts at 8:30 am, and the sale starts at 10 am.

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#### Meeting Dates

- May 17th
- June 28th, Picnic

Meetings start at 1:30 pm at Olbrich Gardens unless otherwise noted

#### Up-Coming Events

- May 9, Spring Orchid Sale, Olbrich
- June 11-15, Native Orchid Conference, Green Bay
- September 12-13, Wisconsin Orchid Society Show

#### Officers and Committees

##### President:

Meredyth Graham (2026)  
[megmcL6@gmail.com](mailto:megmcL6@gmail.com)

##### Vice President:

Chuck Acker (2027)  
[cacker@tds.net](mailto:cacker@tds.net)

##### Secretary:

Lynn West (2027)  
[LynneWest15@yahoo.com](mailto:LynneWest15@yahoo.com)

##### Treasurer:

Ken Cameron (2026)  
[oggtreasurer@yahoo.com](mailto:oggtreasurer@yahoo.com)

##### Past President (non-voting)

Susan Reed  
[greed@tds.net](mailto:greed@tds.net)

##### Board:

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[CrazyCatPlantLady@gmail.com](mailto:CrazyCatPlantLady@gmail.com)

Nancy Thomas (2027)  
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Theodore Ceplina (2028)  
[theodoreceplina@gmail.com](mailto:theodoreceplina@gmail.com)

##### Travel Team:

Open

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**Liaisons:**  
AOS: Nancy Thomas  
MAOC: Lynn West

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At our next meeting we will be hosting in-person speaker Bill Thoms from South Carolina. His “Bulbophyllums-WAFL-HSE presentation” is bound to be educational as well as humorous. He will not have plants for sale. Also at the May meeting, the Guild will hold elections for President, Treasurer and one three-year At-Large Board position. Information about the people running for these positions appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

I'd like to once again thank all the members that make our organization and our meetings so much fun and educational. We have so many people with much to offer in terms of knowledge, expertise and energy. I look forward to the third Sunday of every month at Olbrich Botanical Gardens!

See you in a few weeks!

— Meg Graham

## Spring Mother's Day Orchid Sale

**Saturday, May 9, 10 AM—2 PM**  
**Olbrich Gardens**

Join our new sale coordinators, Joan Dziejwior and Emily Sneed, for an orchid sale just in time for Mother's Day—or to add something special to your own collection.

The sale will feature Paphiopedilum and Phragmipedium orchids from Hawaii, selected by Chuck Acker, along with a wide variety of orchids chosen by Emily, Joan, and Lorraine Snyder from Orchids by Hausermann. Members of the Madison Orchid Growers Guild will be on hand to answer questions and help you choose the perfect orchid to take home.

**Come early!** We typically sell out well before 2 PM—often closer to noon.

## What's Blooming at Home . . .

Sue Reed's *Phrag caudatum* var *gigantum*, “This is the season of no orchid shows so my Phrags are spiking!! I have had this *Phrag caudatum* for awhile and so far I have been able to keep my cat from trimming the long petals. The petals are still growing and the longest is roughly 29”. I grow this in a cool in winter, warm in summer sunporch, eastern exposure, dirty windows, and generally sitting in water. I fertilize weekly weakly.”

Keith Nelson's Phrag. Stairway to Heaven (*wallisii* x *popowii*) crossed by Jason Fischer in 2010. “I got it as a seedling about 2015 so it's 16 years old . Petals get to 34”. Mine haven't quite made it to 3 feet, maybe this year.”



# NOMINATIONS FOR CANDIDATES TO OGG BOARD

*Notice re: OGG By-laws ARTICLE XII: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS*

*The names of those nominated shall be published in the May Newsletter and formally nominated at the May Meeting. Nominations from the floor will also be accepted at the May meeting only if duly seconded and written consent of those nominated is presented. The names of those nominated shall be placed on a ballot and read before the Guild at the May Membership meeting. If only one person is nominated for a position, he or she shall be elected by acclamation. However, if more than one person is nominated for a position, each paid-up member present, shall be entitled to vote by secret ballot for the contested position. The person receiving the most votes shall be elected. The new Officers and Director shall take office at the end of meeting during which elections are held.*

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The following Guild members have been nominated for these open positions:

## **President**

### **Meredyth Graham (incumbent)**

I would like to officially run for the two year position of President of the Orchid Growers Guild. I have been a member of the OGG for over 25 years. I am currently on the Members Programming Committee where I help organize the flow of each monthly meeting by arriving early to set up/arrange tables and chairs depending on the focus of that month's meeting. I help organize the flow of our meetings from the moment members walk through the door. In addition to running our monthly meetings, my commitment to the Guild is evident due to my work as the Orchid Quest Volunteer Coordinator as well as willingness to assist with taking down many of our Away Show exhibits, attending numerous Orchid Quest meetings and even the Mid America Orchid Congress in Dayton, Ohio last summer.



My 32-year career as a High School Biology and Environmental Science teacher provided me with more than just scientific knowledge; it forged my abilities in public speaking, data organization and critical problem-solving. I have always been a person who identifies needs and takes action. I look forward to continuing to use my professional experience and passion for or-

chids and the environment to ensure the Orchid Growers Guild of Madison continues to thrive as a strong, educational and vibrant community.

## **Treasurer**

### **Ken Cameron (incumbent)**

Ken Cameron, Ph.D. has been a member of the Orchid Growers Guild since he moved to the Madison area 18 years ago and has become especially active in the Guild over the past five years. Ken is a Professor of Botany at UW-Madison where he also serves as Director of the Wisconsin State Herbarium and Chair of the undergraduate major in Conservation Biology. Ken's research on orchid biology has been published widely and he has been recognized with several national awards for his scholarship and outreach efforts. Ken is currently serving as President of the Botanical Society of America, a professional organization of >3,000 members, and has been our Guild Treasurer for the past two years. He looks forward to every one of our monthly meetings and enjoys playing with numbers! As Treasurer, he will be committed to maintaining the fiscal health of the Orchid Growers Guild, while also advocating for wise investments in its members.



## Board Director at Large 1 of 3

### Steven Liu

I've been growing orchids for over 20 years, with a particular passion for the Cattleya alliance, which makes up the majority of my 500+ plant collection. My enthusiasm deepened after attending my first Orchid Quest three years ago, inspiring me to expand my collection and even build a dedicated greenhouse last summer. I've been an active member of the society, regularly attending meetings and contributing to events like Orchid Quest, while also staying involved with neighboring societies and regional shows. I'm currently pursuing acceptance into the AOS judging program to further deepen my knowledge. Professionally, I bring experience in digital marketing, financial planning and analysis, and vendor outreach. I'm excited for the opportunity to give back to the society that has played such a meaningful role in my growth by helping strengthen our community and share knowledge with fellow growers.



### Evan Bane

Evan Bane serves as the Vice Chairperson for Orchid Quest, the premier annual public exhibition of the Orchid Growers Guild of Madison. He has more than 40 years of experience in marketing, research, communications, public relations, government affairs, organizational communication, and trade-show management. He is a past Wisconsin Chapter President of the Public Relations Society of America. Evan holds a bachelor's degree in economics from UW-Milwaukee and a master's degree in communications from Marquette University. In October 2025, Evan published a children's early-reader book titled – *From Cotton Picker to Cowboy to Cattleman: The Amazing True Story of 80 John Wallace*. Lisa, his wife, and Evan have found OGG to be a wonderful group of people who willingly share their orchid expertise and their friendship.



Ken Cameron's *Pleione Tongariro* (Versailles x *pleionoides*). [See page 8 form more about \*Pleione\* orchids](#)



This was the first bloom of Dennis Pfarrar's *Rhyncholaeliocattleya* Hawaiian Thrill 'Paradise' (Hisako Akatsuka x American Heritage)



Terri Jozwiak's *Vanda* (Bitz's Heart Throb x Kasem's Delight)

## APRIL OGG RIBBON JUDGING

### First Place

Ken Cameron	<i>Brassocattleya</i> Yuan Nan Star War (C. Memoria Robert Strait x Bc. Wonder Star)
Ken Cameron	<i>Cattleya maxima</i>
Travis Wilson	<i>Dendrobium</i> Chocolate Chip (Micro Chip x <i>normanbyense</i> )
Phoebe Miller	<i>Lepanthes calodictyon</i>
Cheri Seeger	<i>Leptotes</i>
Alfonso Doucette	<i>Masdevallia tricolor</i>
Ken Cameron	<i>Odbrs</i> Kenneth Bivin ( <i>Onc. cariniferum</i> x <i>Brs. arcuigera</i> )
Sue Reed	<i>Oncidium</i> Culiginosa ( <i>fuscatum</i> x <i>nobile</i> )
Amy Holt	<i>Oncostele</i> Hilo Firecracker 'Lucky Strike' (Catatante x Aloha Sparks)
Marla Robinson	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> ( <i>delenatii</i> v. <i>dunkel</i> x <i>delenatii</i> )
Wanda Buckingham	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Anthony P Curtis (Wilson's Mawr x Nulight)
Jeff Metcalf	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Booth's Sand Lady (Lady Isabel x <i>sanderianum</i> )
Nancy Thomas	<i>Paphiopedilum hirsutissimum</i> 'Late Sunset'
Jeff Metcalf	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Ho Chi Minh ( <i>delenatii</i> x <i>vietnamense</i> )
Meredyth Graham	<i>Paphiopedilum rothschildianum</i>
Damon Smith	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Wilhelmina's Child (Wilhelmina's Stone 'Slipper Zone Find' x <i>rothchildianum</i> 'Double Pride')
Lynn West	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Wössner Ministar ( <i>henryanum</i> x <i>helenae</i> )
Chuck Acker	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Acker's Light (Magdalene Acker x Margit Moses)
Chuck Acker	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Charming Pink Fantasy (Taida New Luchia x Charming Angela)
Roy Yaroch	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Chi-Yueh Kaleidoscope (Golden Taipei x Lioulin Pretty Lip)
Chuck Acker	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Fuller's Sunset (Taisuco Date x Chian Xen Queen)
Alfonso Doucette	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> KS Big Diana 'Kung Sir' (KS Cadence x KS Big Platinum)
Dan Schmidt	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> NOID
Sue Reed	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> NOID
Chuck Acker	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Surf Song (Taipei Gold x King Shiang's Rose)
Marla Robinson	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Star's Green Apple
Ken Cameron	<i>Pleione</i> Tongariro (Versailles x <i>pleionoides</i> )
Dennis Pfarrar	<i>Rhyncholaeliocattleya</i> Shinfong Fresh ( <i>Rlc.</i> Little Toshie x C. Love Fresh)
Sue Reed	<i>Tolumnia calochila</i>
Terri Jozwiak	<i>Vanda</i> (Bitz's Heart Throb x Kasem's Delight)

### Second Place

Roy Yaroch	<i>Cattleya</i> (Katherine Clarkson 'SVO' HCC/AOS x Little Dipper 'SVO Sato' 4N)
Ken Cameron	<i>Cattleya</i> Exotic Fireworks (Virginia Dickey x Memoria Trudy Marsh)
No name	<i>Dendrobium laevifolium</i> 'Hot Pink' x sib 'The King'
Ken Cameron	<i>Dendrobium</i> Roy Tokanuga ( <i>atroviolaceum</i> x <i>johnsoniae</i> )
Ken Cameron	<i>Maxillaria tenuifolia</i>
Jeff Metcalf	<i>Oncidium</i> Wild Willie 'Bingo' ( <i>reichenheimii</i> x Wildwood)
Terri Jozwiak	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Diane Dahlquist ( <i>sukhakulii</i> x Red Brier)
Ken Cameron	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Strawberry Roan (Lauren Klehm x Inca)
Marla Robinson	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> (Memoria Kay Dancy x Hampshire Cloud)
Amy Holt	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Brother Lancer '348' (Brother Buddha x Plantation Polkadot)

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Gerald King	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Mituo Solar Blaze (Mituo Sunrise x Mituo Speciosa Dragon)
Marla Robinson	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> NOID
Wanda Buckingham	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Surf Song OX 1233
Wanda Buckingham	<i>Phragmipedium</i> Ainsworthii ( <i>longifolium</i> x <i>Sedenii</i> )
Ken Cameron	<i>Phragmipedium</i> Cardinale ( <i>Sedenii</i> x <i>schlimii</i> )
Steven Liu	<i>Phragmipedium</i> Lemoinierianum (Calurum x <i>Sedenii</i> )
Patricia Jones	<i>Phragmipedium</i> longifolium
Ken Cameron	<i>Porroglossum</i> sp & hybrids (assortment of 4)
Dennis Pfarrar	<i>Rhyncholaeliocattleya</i> Hawaiian Thrill 'Paradise' (Hisako Akatsuka x American Heritage)
Ken Cameron	<i>Sarcochilus</i> (assortment of four)
Rachel Miller	<i>Tolumnia</i> Jairak Firm 'Fine Point' (Rainbow x Plush)

### Third Place

No Name	<i>Oncidium</i> Tiger Hambühren x California Gold
Meredyth Graham	<i>Paphiopedilum philippinense</i> v. alba
Sean Stake	<i>Phalaenopsis schilleriana</i>
Gerald King	<i>Phalaenopsis tetraspis</i> f. livida 'Faerie's Little Sister'
Rachel Miller	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Tying Shin Jaguar (Sogo Gava x Salu Prince)
Steven Liu	<i>Phragmipedium</i> (Anthony Omeis x <i>kovachii</i> 'Peruvian Love')
Terri Jozwiak	<i>Phragmipedium caudatum</i>
Patricia Jones	<i>Phragmipedium</i> Schroederae ( <i>caudatum</i> x <i>Sedenii</i> )
Steven Liu	<i>Warczewczella</i> ( <i>Cochleanthes</i> ) Discolor

### Miscellaneous

Gerald King	<i>Cattleya</i> Lana Coryell ( <i>walkeriana</i> x Beaufort)
Ken Cameron	<i>Paphiopedilum gratixianum</i>
Sue Reed	<i>Paphiopedilum lowii</i>



Amy Holt's *Oncostele* Hilo Firecracker 'Lucky Strike' (Catatante x Aloha Sparks). "I love the Santa Chuck event because I get to try something new. It was beautifully healthy when I received it. I know nothing of this orchid but I'm decent at oncidiums. However this plant didn't bloom in 2025 at all. I fertilize weakly weekly with the RePotme granular that I learned about at OGG. I add a few drops of Physan 20 to each gallon of water as suggested by Lorraine. I use RO water and I summer it outside." And voila!



Sue Reed, "I bought this mini Phal [NOID] at Bruce Company about a year or so ago. I liked the color, shape with the wide labellum (bottom petal, a mutation I like). The presentation of the flowers seemed quite good as well as the clear color. I usually have difficulty in growing and blooming phals but this one is cooperating! From talking to other members I

realized I was over-watering my Phals and now I wait until the roots turn white before watering them. So I use clear pots. When the roots get enough water the velamen (outer white layer of orchid roots) turns green. This plant did receive a second at the Batavia orchid show this year. This is the second blooming from the original spikes. I have never seen such great second blooming off a spike!

"My orchids don't get high light which might be why many don't rebloom. So even if you have difficulty growing one type of orchid there very well might be another of the same type that you can grow! Growing orchids is always a learning experience!!

"Happy learning and growing!"

# Show and Tell . . .



Roy Yaroch: “The Cattleya I brought along was a seed cross I had purchased from Maneki Hill Orchids during Orchid Quest. It’s *C. Katherine Clarkson* 'SVO' HCC/AOS x *C. Little Dipper* 'SVO Sato' 4n. I believe it’s peloric. The sepals have now turned a nice lavender color.”



The judges were impressed by Jeff Metcalf’s *Paphiopedilum* Booth’s Sand Lady (Lady Isabel x *sanderianum*)

3D-printed 4x4x8” container



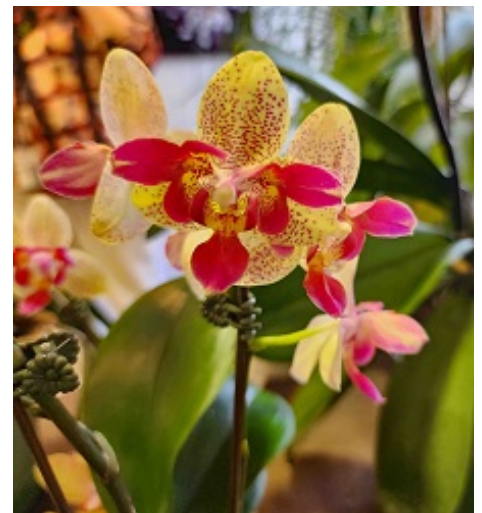
Rachel Miller showed her daughter’s *Lepanthes calodictyon* . “Phoebe said the container she used to transport her *Lepanthes* worked well to protect her sensitive flowering plant that requires a lot of humidity. She purchased it at Reptile Rapture on Monona Drive for \$25. Inside the container, she put a layer of LECA followed by damp sphagnum moss. Currently, she is experimenting with some battery-powered lights to illuminate the container and make the tiny plants more visible.”



Chuck Acker with his spectacular *Phal* Acker’s Light (Magdalene Acker x Margit Moses)



Alfonso Doucette, “One of my favorite orchid photographers is Ron Parsons. While browsing his photos, I came across an image of the rare *Masdevallia tricolor*, photographed at Orquifojalles in Colombia. A friend who regularly imports plants from the nursery agreed to look for it and was able to secure a small division. I’ve been growing it for just over a year, and it has quickly become a favorite. It flowers throughout the year and produces a subtle, sweet, slightly mushroom-like fragrance. I grow it in a wine cooler at 52–60°F, mounted on plastic shingles with sphagnum moss, with humidity generally above 70% and weekly fertilization.” [See pages 9-10 for information on cool orchidariums](#)



Roy Yaroch’s peloric *Phalaenopsis* Chi-Yueh Kaleidoscope (Golden Taipei x Lioulin Pretty Lip)

# Nothing Says Spring Like Blooming Pleione Bulbs

It's spring! and throughout Madison various garden centers are selling pots of miniature daffodil, tulip, and hyacinth bulbs. Certain flowers, like these, help us to mark the seasons, holidays, and events throughout our lives. In other parts of the world, people use orchids in this way. I've written previously about how particular species of Asian *Cymbidium* are emblematic of spring in China and Japan. Everybody should try to grow at least one. There is another beautiful orchid that is also popular at this time of year – *Pleione*.

Although not as commonly grown as the more traditional spring bulbs (e.g., *Crocus*), across parts of Europe, especially in the U.K., many people have a pot or shallow dish of *Pleione* bulbs sitting on their windowsill or porch in anticipation of the first warm days of spring. Technically these are pseudobulbs – the above ground, green, plump, water storage stems that are typical of so many orchids. The pseudobulbs allow the plants to go dormant during the winter months and provide food reserves to the new growth in the spring. I like to think of pseudobulbs as the hump on a camel's back. Focusing on the *Pleione* pseudobulbs is the best way to learn how to grow them. In early spring the mature and rootless pseudobulb sends out one or two new growths, each with a developing leaf and hopefully also a flower. If kept cool and out of direct sun and wind, these will last for a week or two. As the flower fades, the leaf begins to expand. This is the time to begin with light watering. Although we cannot see them, the underside of the pseudobulb is now sending down the season's new set of roots. In this regard they are sort of like growing tropical *Catasetum* that also require a winter rest period, except that *Pleione* are temperate orchids that prefer cool to cold temperatures in winter. I keep my *Pleione* "bulbs" bone dry and in an unheated sunporch that stays only slightly above freezing. Cold and wet will rot the bulbs and kill them while dormant. As spring transitions to summer the *Pleione* need regular watering and light fertilizer. The terrestrial potting mix should stay moist, but well draining during this time of



growth. The plant is building up its new pseudobulbs for next year. As autumn arrives you will notice the leaves start to yellow. At this time stop watering and allow the leaves to drop for the cold and dry winter rest. Some people even store them in the refrigerator. I like to repot the new rootless bulbs at this time. The wait seems to last forever, but eventually the promise of spring is kept and you will notice a little bud beginning to form. Hurray!

In Europe many species and hybrids in all sorts of colors are available, but here in the USA only a few plant nurseries (such as Edelweiss Perennials or Dancing Oaks Nursery) sell *Pleione* bulbs. Most are located in the Pacific Northwest where people grow them outdoors in their gardens. They occasionally come up for sale on eBay as well. Insist on virus-free nursery grown stock and never buy wild collected plants. Sadly, *Pleione* species are nearly extirpated in parts of China because of over collecting for the traditional medicine trade.

Many people are crazy about *Pleiones*. From 1988 to 2005 a color magazine devoted entirely to them was published in England called *The Pleione Review*. Back issues are available online, but it has now been replaced by an excellent website ([www.pleione.info](http://www.pleione.info)) full of information. There is also a Facebook page dedicated to *Pleione* enthusiasts and several good YouTube videos made by British growers. Did I mention that *Pleione maculata*, unlike its relatives, blooms not in spring but in fall? That's the topic for a follow up story. For now let's enjoy the flowers from our spring bulbs!

# Turning a Wine Cooler into an Orchid Enclosure for *Masdevallia* and *Lepanthes*

**Introduction:** Have you ever fallen in love with a *Masdevallia* or *Lepanthes*—only to watch it slowly decline on your windowsill? Many of these high-elevation Andean orchids thrive in conditions that are difficult to recreate at home: cool temperatures, constant humidity, and steady air movement. The good news is that there's a surprisingly simple solution—a wine cooler.

I've been growing these orchids in wine coolers for over ten years now, and the setup has become much simpler over time. What started as a bit of experimentation has turned into a reliable, compact system that consistently produces healthy plants and regular blooms. Even better, the entire system can be assembled in under an hour with just a handful of components.

At its core, the setup relies on five essentials: a wine cooler, grow lights, mounting material, a small fan, and a drainage tray. The cooler creates a stable, cool environment, while the lights provide gentle daytime warmth. A small fan keeps air moving, helping distribute humidity and temperature evenly.

One of the biggest lessons I've learned is that simpler is often better. High-powered lights tend to generate too much heat and dry out the chamber, while lower-output LEDs sometimes fail to produce enough light for some species to flower. Similarly, while temperature controllers can be useful, many species grow perfectly well with just the slight temperature rise created by the lights during the day.

The result is a stable environment around 50–60°F with high humidity and airflow—conditions very close to a cloud forest. Under these conditions, plants that once struggled can become vigorous and floriferous. There's something very satisfying about looking through the glass and seeing a miniature cloud forest—cool air, mossy mounts, and tiny flowers tucked into every corner.

**Materials:** Below is a streamlined list of the components used in this setup. Prices are approximate:

## **Wine Cooler**

EUHOMY 45-Bottle Wine Cooler — Model: WC-145 — ~\$220

*Alternative:* Insignia 29-Bottle Wine Cooler — Model: NS-WC29SS9 — ~\$300

## **Grow Lights**

Barrina 1FT LED Grow Light 72W — Model: TX-18 — ~\$30 (two recommended)

*Alternative 3-light setup (these lights run cooler than the Barrina model):*

Hygger LED Fish Tank Light — Model: HG978-14W — ~\$30 (two recommended)

Kessil Tuna Sun LED — Model: A80 — ~\$150

## **Mounting Material**

AGG Fencer PVC-Coated Wire Mesh —

Model: BSA1122C020 — ~\$20

Hillman Steel Wire Rope 20 Gauge — Model: 123106 — ~\$10

Wojjided 8-Inch Premium Needle-Nose Pliers — Model: 711181851656 — ~\$5

## **Fan (Air Circulation)**

ANVISION 40mm USB Cooling Fan — Model: YDM4010B05 — ~\$15

## **Drainage Tray**

Chris.W Silicone Washer Tray 27" x 27" —

Model: S27 — ~\$25

## **Optional: Temperature Control**

TrolMaster Digital Day/Night Temperature Controller — Model: BETA-4 — ~\$250

Govee Digital Hygrometer/Thermometer — Model: H5075 — ~\$10

**Estimated Total Cost:** ~\$300–\$400 (basic setup)

**Configuration Steps:** Setting up the system is straightforward and can typically be completed in under an hour:

### **Start with the base**

Place your drainage tray where the wine cooler will sit to protect your floors.

### **Position the wine cooler**

Unpack and place the unit on the tray. Let it sit for 24 hours before turning it on to allow internal fluids to settle.

### **Prepare the interior**

Remove all shelves except the top one to create an open growing chamber.

### **Measure and cut mounting panels**

Measure the back and sides where plants will hang. Leave about six inches of space from the back wall. Cut hardware cloth to size.

### **Install mounting surfaces**

Use wire to suspend the hardware cloth from the top shelf, creating vertical mounting panels.

### **Set up lighting**

Place grow lights on the top shelf. Add hard-

*(Continued on page 10)*

(Continued from page 9)

ware cloth if needed for stability.

### Route power cords

Run cords through the door gap. If needed, temporarily remove the door to feed cords through. A small gap in the seal is fine.

### Add air circulation

Suspend the fan near the top, oriented downward to circulate air through the chamber. Use wire to hang. Route the cord alongside the lighting.

### Set the temperature

Set the wine cooler to approximately 52°F for high-elevation Andean species (ca. 2000–3000 m). Under these conditions, temperatures will typically rise a few degrees during the day when the lights are on and drop slightly at night, creating a gentle diurnal fluctuation that suits many *Masdevallia* and *Lepanthes*.

Optional: add a thermometer to track the high and low temperature.



**Culture Notes:** The following *Masdevallia* and *Lepanthes* are among my favorite species grown in this setup. They are maintained in a wine cooler set to approximately 52°F without an external temperature controller. Under these conditions, temperatures typically approach 60°F during the day when the lights are on and approach 50°F at night, providing a gentle diurnal fluctuation.

Plants are watered daily using distilled water and a spray pump. I fertilized once a week, alternating between Jack's Classic Orchid Special (30-10-10) and FEED ME! rePotme fertilizer (13-3-15). I grow all plants mounted on plastic shingles with sphagnum moss. While I previously used wooden mounts, I now prefer plastic, as roots can be removed with significantly less damage.

Smaller plants are generally remounted annually to maintain fresh media and encourage root growth. Larger, established specimens are only remounted as needed—typically when they begin to decline, such as reduced flowering, slowed growth, or leaf yellowing.

If you've struggled with cool-growing orchids in the past, this setup can be a game changer. It's compact, relatively inexpensive, and—most importantly—effective. Once dialed in, it opens the door to growing a whole new group of orchids successfully.

— Alfonso Doucette

## ORCHID QUEST 2027 UP-DATE

Orchid Quest (OQ) will be February 6-7 with set-up on February 5, 2027 at Monona Terrace.

OGG is pleased to announce that we have invited the Mid-America Orchid Congress (MAOC) to join us at Orchid Quest (OQ).

What does this mean for OQ? We look forward to welcoming additional visitors from neighboring states, including MAOC members and AOS accredited judges. Their participation may also bring a few enhancements to this coming year's event as we showcase everything that makes Orchid Quest special.

Interested in getting involved? Volunteers are welcome to join the planning committee. For more information, please contact Terri Jozwiak at [lodijoz@charter.net](mailto:lodijoz@charter.net).

More details will be shared soon—stay tuned!

— Terri Jozwiak

# Who Knew Orchids are Deceptive and Tricky in Nature?

Several members of the Orchid Growers Guild recently learned how to propagate orchids during workshops offered by Chuck Acker in April. The workshop provided a simple biology lesson followed by hands on practice pollinating cut orchid flowers.

Pollination is essential for the reproduction of most flowering plants. Successful pollination involves fertilization and development of seeds. Anthers are the male part of the plant, and they hold pollen grains on the flowerhead. In nature, pollinators such as birds and insects will capture some of the pollen from the anthers and will then share it with the female stigma located in the same or other flower heads. When flowers open on plants such as daisies, dahlias and lilies, the anthers stick out while holding soft yellow powdery pollen. The easy access to pollen allows pollinators such as bees, wasps and other insects to do the well-choreographed dance on flowerheads. The insects become covered in the yellow pollen and then fly to another flowerhead and share some of the pollen grains with the plant's stigma, before heading back to their hives or nests with this nutrient rich food.

In nature, orchids can be challenging to propagate. Most orchids have three petals and three sepals and a lip at the bottom of the flowerhead. The lip acts as a landing platform for insect pollinators as they try to reach the pollen that is hidden in the back. There is one fertile anther located across from the lip with two tiny balls of a sticky sack of pollen wax attached to the anther. Instead of rolling in powdery pollen, a pollinator such as flies must go deep into the flowerhead and pull off the pollen sack. They then drop the tiny sacks into the column located below the lip and anther. This starts the process as the sack travels to the plant's ovary for fertilization. If all goes well, a seed pod will develop behind the flowerhead and will take up to five months before the seeds are ready to be dispersed into nature.

Since there is no pollen for the insects to take back to their hives or nests to eat, the orchid

needs to provide a creative incentive. Some orchids will give off pheromone scents that mimics virgin female insects or sweet nectar. In the end, the pollinators will do the work without any real rewards.

This strategy is often called orchid deception.

In the lab or at home, the process of propagating orchids fortunately doesn't involve tricks or deception. However, it does take strong eye-glasses to see tiny orchid parts and a steady hand! The only equipment needed are a cardboard mat, toothpicks and a sharp razor blade. Chuck developed videos of closeups of the propagation process for several different types of orchids. He also provided fresh flowerheads from *Phalaenopsis*, *Cymbidium* and *Phragmipedium* orchids for us to practice on. The different types of orchids gave us the chance to identify reproductive parts in each flowerhead and remove the pollen sack from the anther and place it in the column. If we were to propagate flowerheads still attached to the live plant and if the propagation was successful, a seed pod would grow below the flower. After several months, the pod would become enlarged, and the seeds would be ready to put in flasks to continue growing.

It was an excellent workshop and I learned a lot. Since orchids are our passion, it's important to learn about the plant biology.

Chuck is hoping to offer other workshops next fall. The orchid propagation workshop is part of the ongoing efforts by the OGG to offer members free educational workshops to continue learning more about orchids.

— Lori Getter



# Orchidex™ NEWLY NAMED HYBRID!

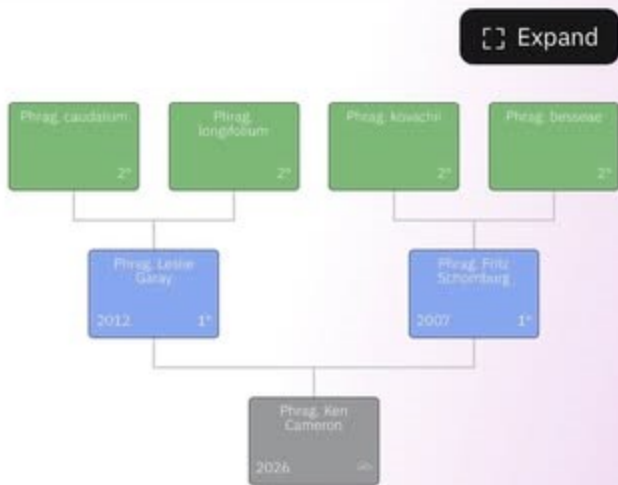
## Phragmipedium Ken Cameron

*Phrag. Leslie Garay* × *Phrag. Fritz Schomburg*

Apr 3 2026 • Ecuagenera

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ANCESTRY PROGENY



## What's Blooming at Home . . .



Sue Reed, "I bought a small flask from Chuck a few years ago. This plant had bloomed about twice before but none were as dark as this one. I had given several small plants from Chuck's flask to Dan. Dan was able to bloom and exhibited his plants. Chuck gave Dan permission to register the cross with the name Nancy Pants. (*Phrag Anthony Omeis* x *Phrag Asuko Fisher*) This a nice small plant with 9" leaf span, flower about 2". I grow it under lights in a cool basement."

## The Huntington and Orchid Digest present

Speakers Day 2026, Saturday, June 20, 2026  
10:00 am to 7:30 pm

Hybrid event: In-person and Virtual  
at The Huntington

1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino, CA 91108

Registration includes:

Four Speakers, Vendors, Book Sales, On-Site Silent Auction, Happy Hour, Dinner, Recording

Members through 6/12/26:

\$99.00: In-person registration, recording  
Virtual \$40.00: lectures, recording

Nonmembers: \$125.00: In-person registration, recording

Virtual \$55.00: lectures, recording

Non-members: Join now and take advantage of the member rate for the coming year on all Orchid Digest Events, plus the journal!



Jack Zhu: "Beyond the Bloom: Variegation and Culture of Cymbidiums, including *Cymbidium lancifolium*"



Nicholas Rust: "Terrestrial Orchids"



Jason Downing is the Director of Research at the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Coral Gables



Daniel Geiger: "Fascination of the Overlooked Miniature: Oberonia"



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